WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for preventing acute organ damage associated with extracorporeal circulation of a patient's blood through a heart-lung machine, comprising contacting the patient's blood circulating through the heart-lung machine with a pharmaceutical composition comprising at least one anti-selectin antibody in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, said pharmaceutical composition being contacted to the patient's blood 1 - 30 minutes before ending the extracorporeal circulation and at a dose of 1.0 - 10 mg/kg of body weight of the patient.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said anti-selectin antibody is an anti-L-selectin antibody.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said anti-selectin antibody is an anti-E-selectin antibody.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said anti-selectin antibody is an anti-P-selectin antibody.

5. The method according to claim 1, wherein said pharmaceutical composition is administered at a dose of 2 - 4 mg/kg of body weight of the patient.

6. The method according to claim 1, wherein the anti-selectin antibody is a humanized monoclonal antibody.

7. The method according to claim 1, wherein the anti-L-selectin antibody is HuDreg 200.

8. The method according to claim 1, wherein the anti-L-selectin antibody is HuDreg 55.

9. The method according to claim 1, further comprising administering directly to the patient an additional 1 - 3 doses of the pharmaceutical composition at 1 - 4 mg/kg of body weight of the patient for 1-3 days.

10. A method for treating a patient who has suffered a polytraumatic event, comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a dose of an anti-selectin antibody in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier to said patient.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein said anti-selectin antibody is an anti-L-selectin antibody.

12. The method of claim 10, wherein said anti-selectin antibody is an anti-E-selectin antibody.

13. The method of claim 10, wherein said anti-selectin antibody is an anti-P-selectin antibody.

14. The method of claim 10, wherein a dose ranging from 1.0 - 10 mg/kg of body weight of the patient of the anti-selectin antibody in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier is administered 1 - 5 times after the polytraumatic event.

15. The method of claim 10, wherein the first dose is administered 0.5 - 8 hours after the polytraumatic event.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the first dose is administered 0.5 - 4 hours after the polytraumatic event.

17. The method of claim 14, wherein the interval between administration of the doses of the anti-selectin antibody in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier ranges between 6 and 72 hours.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the interval between administration of the doses of the anti-selectin antibody in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier ranges between 6 and 36 hours.

19. The method of claim 10, wherein doses of the anti-selectin antibody and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier are administered up to 10 days after the polytraumatic event, and the concentration and time of administration of the doses is determined by the concentration of the anti-selectin antibody in the serum or plasma of the patient at intervals of 6 - 24 hours after administration of the previous dose, wherein when

(a) the concentration of said anti-selectin antibody is less than 10 μg/ml of said patient's serum or plasma, then a dose at least as high the previous dose, up to a maximum dose 10 mg/kg, is administered, or when

(b) the concentration of said anti-selectin antibody is between 10 μg/ml and 50 μg/ml of said patient's serum or plasma, then a dose which is half that of the previous dose is administered, or when

(c) the concentration of said anti-selectin antibody is greater than 50 μg/ml of said patient's serum or plasma, then a dose of anti-L-selectin antibody and a pharmaceutically acceptable is not administered, and the patient's serum or plasma is further monitored in accordance with steps (a) and (b).

20. A method of claim 10, wherein the anti-selectin antibody is a humanized antibody.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the anti-selectin antibody is HuDreg 55 or HuDreg 200.

22. A method for reducing the probability of incidence of organ failure after a polytraumatic event, comprising administering an amount of an anti-selectin antibody in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier to said patient, in an amount sufficient to reduce probability of incidence of said organ failure.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein the anti-selectin antibody is humanized.

24. The method of claim 22, wherein said anti-selectin antibody is an anti-L-selectin antibody.

25. The method of claim 22, wherein said anti-selectin antibody is an anti-P-selectin antibody.

26. The method of claim 22, wherein said anti-selectin antibody is an anti-E-selectin antibody.

27. The method of claim 24, wherein the anti-L-selectin antibody is Dreg 55 or HuDreg 55.

28. The method of claim 22, wherein said organ failure is multiple organ failure.